

From: Mike & Lori
Sent: Monday, 16 March 2020 2:32 PM
Subject: For Inwards Correspondence, please

Bob Fearn

Who is Bob Fearn?

Ask your members .. "Who knows who Bob Fearn is?" You may not be surprised to find few put their hands up.

Yet Bob is a very important part of our game. He is the author of Compass, our scoring program.

At Cambridge we have been using Compass for something like 25 years for a one-off payment of \$400 - same as any other Compass club. For 40 years - since he played bridge in The Golden Age of Tokoroa - Bob has been developing Compass. His many updates have all been for free. To the best of my knowledge Bob has never charged anyone anything more than the initial \$400 - even when he has spent many hours helping them remotely.

We all know the game runs on love. Thousands of people do thousands of hours for no reward .. but usually get recognition in some form. We seem all but a few to have overlooked Bob .. even when he makes a point of staying home to be on call when a major event is happening. Often he'll be there for any event if you let him know about it. A prime example is the annual NZ-Wide Pairs for which Bob gets out of bed at 3am in the States to sit in on the scoring he developed. We couldn't do without him - literally. He usually pays the cost of any phone call: we seldom if ever give even that a thought.

He wrote in a recent email to me: *"... again this sort of commitment always goes unrecognized. These situations are very common and I know that this is the way it is. However, after 40 years it is starting to grate. The crunch is that I never get any compensations for time and materials, whilst others do."* (meaning scorers and directors). This was surprising to me after all the time I'd been thoughtlessly taking him for granted. And I am in touch with him almost every day.

Friends .. we need to do something about this .. show some appreciation at the very least. This man seems to have been bottling up this grievance for a while and we wouldn't want him to explode, would we? Might I suggest that, when your club is using something specially developed or you've had Bob on stand-by or you simply feel grateful that he's always been there and done so much for free, that you consider building in some sort of ... royalty ... for him in your budget or even making an ex-gratia payment? He and Marie like red wine and have a Westpac NZ bank account. And Marie, like all long-suffering partners, has been part of the journey as well.

See [dropbox/Compassmate/Compassmate Download Files/Bob's Contact Details](#). I have taken the liberty of adding the Westpac account number to that file should you feel inclined to use it.

Thank you for any consideration you give this email
Mike Neels

(and please don't tell him it was me put you up to this - he'll be embarrassed enough as it is)